

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PER-03 SCSE-00 SCA-01 EB-07 /022 W

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R 031233Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY MANAMA BAHRAIN

TO SECSTATE WASHINGTON DC 3327

USDOC WASHINGTON DC

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI UAE

AMCONGEN DHAHRAN SAUDI ARABIA

AMEMBASSY DOHA QATAR

AMEMBASSY JIDDA SAUDI ARABIA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY MUSCAT OMAN

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN IRAN

UNCLAS MANAMA 1101

ABU DHABI PLEASE PASS DUBAI

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS : OTRA, BA

SUBJECT : HOTEL SCARCITY IN BAHRAIN

1. HAVING ONLY RECENTLY BEEN SOMEWHAT RELIEVED BY THE DELAYED OPENING OF THE BAHRAIN HILTON IN DECEMBER 1975, THE HOTEL SITUATION FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE HAS TAKEN A TURN FOR THE WORSE. THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE GULF HOTEL HAS RECENTLY ANNOUNCED THAT IT IS "PERMANENTLY" CLOSING ONE HALF OF THE 230 ROOM HOTEL BECAUSE OF SERIOUS STRUCTURAL PROBLEMS WHICH RESULT IN IT BEING "UNSAFE" FOR OCCUPANCY. OF THE REMAINING 120 ROOMS AT THE GULF, ALMOST ALL ARE PERMANENTLY COMMITTED TO THE GOVERNMENT OF BAHRAIN AND AIRLINE CREW LAYOVERS. THE GULF, THEREFORE, IS ESSENTIALLY CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC.

2. FOR FIRST CLASS HOTELS, THAT LEAVES THE HILTON (188 ROOMS) AND THE DELMON (120 ROOMS). AT BOTH

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HOTELS THERE IS A SIZEABLE, SEMI-PERMANENT, GROUP

OF LEBANESE NATIONALS WHO HAVE BEEN IN BAHRAIN FOR THE PAST SEVERAL MONTHS AS WELL AS AIRLINE CREWS. THUS OF THOSE 308 ROOMS, PERHAPS ONLY HALF ARE AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC ON AN AVERAGE DAY.

3. IN BAHRAIN, THERE ARE OTHER ACCEPTABLE, ALTHOUGH SMALLER AND DEFINITELY NOT FIVE-STAR, HOTELS-- RANGING DOWN FROM THE TYLOS, AND INCLUDING MOON PLAZA, MIDDLE EAST, SAHARA AND OMAR KHAYYAM. THESE HOTELS HAVE BEEN FULLY BOOKED AS WELL DURING THE PAST YEAR. ONE NEW HOTEL, THE RAMADA INN, MAY OPEN IN SPRING 1977, BUT ASIDE FROM THAT WE SEE NO RELIEF IN SIGHT.

4. ACTION REQUESTED: EMBASSY WOULD BE APPRECIATIVE OF STATE AND COMMERCE AS WELL AS REGIONAL POSTS INFORMING TRAVELLERS INTENDING TO VISIT BAHRAIN OF THE VERY TIGHT HOTEL ROOM SITUATION FOR THE NEXT YEAR. BUSINESSMEN SHOULD COME ONLY WITH CONFIRMED RESERVATIONS. FOR OFFICIAL VISITORS, EMBASSY WOULD APPRECIATE AS MUCH LEAD TIME IN MAKING RESERVATIONS AS POSSIBLE -- AND EVEN THEN WE CAN MAKE NO GUARANTEES ABOUT AVAILABILITY.
TWINAM

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 03 AUG 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976MANAMA01101
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760298-1341
From: MANAMA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760893/aaaaddjo.tel
Line Count: 84
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: SmithRJ
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 25 MAR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <25 MAR 2004 by ReddocGW>; APPROVED <12 JAN 2005 by SmithRJ>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: HOTEL SCARCITY IN BAHRAIN
TAGS: OTRA, BA
To: STATE
COM
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006